CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   An appliance configured for connection to a network and
2   communication with a device connected to the network, the appliance comprising:
3   a processing device configured to control operation of the appliance;
4   memory including logic configured to receive software that facilitates
5   communication between the appliance and the device from a software source; and
6   a network interface device with which the appliance communicates with the
7   software source.

1   2.   The appliance of claim 1, wherein the logic configured to receive
2   software is adapted to transmit approval to the software source in response to a
3   notification from the software source of the availability of the software.

1   3.   The appliance of claim 1, wherein the logic configured to receive
2   software is adapted to transmit approval only upon authorization received by a user of
3   the appliance.

1   4.   The appliance of claim 1, further comprising logic configured to
2   actively retrieve software from the software source.

1   5.   The appliance of claim 4, wherein the logic configured to actively

2 retrieve software is adapted to periodically search for software for the appliance.

1   6.   The appliance of claim 4, wherein the logic configured to actively

2 retrieve software is adapted to search for software for the appliance in response to a

3 communication from the software source.

1   7.   The appliance of claim 1, wherein the logic configured to receive

2 software is adapted to receive executables and data structures for accessing the device.

1   8.   The appliance of claim 1, wherein the appliance is an image capture

2 appliance.

1   9.   An appliance configured for direct connection to a network and

2 communication with a device connected to the network, the appliance comprising:

3   a processing device configured to control operation of the appliance;

4   an acquisition module adopted to receive software that facilitates

5 communication between the appliance and the device from a software source; and

6   network interface devices with which the appliance communicates with the

7 software source.

1   10.   The appliance of claim 9, wherein the means for receiving software are
2   adapted to transmit approval to the software source in response to a notification from
3   the software source of the availability of the software.

1   11.   The appliance of claim 9, further comprising means for actively
2   retrieving software from the software source.

1   12.   The appliance of claim 11, wherein the means for actively retrieving
2   software are adapted to periodically search for software for the appliance.

1   13.   The appliance of claim 11, wherein the means for actively retrieving
2   software are adapted to search for software for the appliance in response to a
3   communication from the software source.

1   14.   The appliance of claim 1, wherein the appliance is an image capture
2   appliance.

1   15.   A network storage device, comprising:

2   a processing device configured to control operation of the device;

3   memory including logic configured to receive software that facilitates

4   communication between a network appliance and a separate network device, and

5   including logic configured to transmit software to the network appliance; and

6   a network interface device with which the network storage device

7   communicates with the network appliance.

1   16.   A method for enabling communications between an appliance and a

2   separate device, comprising the steps of:

3   automatically receiving software with the appliance that facilitates

4   communication between the appliance and the separate device; and

5   storing the software in memory of the appliance such that the appliance is

6   adapted to communicate with the separate device.

1   17.   The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of receiving a

2   notification from a source of software with the appliance regarding the availability of

3   the software prior to receiving the software.

1   18.   The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of automatically

2   searching for software over a network to which the appliance is connected.

1   19.   The method of claim 18, wherein the step of automatically searching is

2   conducted on a periodic basis.

1   20.   The method of claim 18, wherein the step of automatically searching is

2   conducted in response to a communication from the separate device.